



ASSESSMENT

GUIDELINES

for Administering the

Smarter Balanced Assessments

Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT)–Science

Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT)–Science

Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT)SKILLS CHECKLIST–Science

Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) SKILLS
CHECKLIST –Science

Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA)

to:

- Students Who Receive Special Education Services
- Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Students Identified as English Learners
- Students Receiving Designated Supports



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Dannel P. Malloy, Governor

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Allan B. Taylor, Chairperson

Theresa Hopkins-Staten, Vice Chairperson

Charles A. Jaskiewicz III

Terry H. Jones

Estela López

Patricia Keavney-Maruca

Joseph J. Vrabely Jr.

Stephen P. Wright

Patrick Campbell (student member)

Neha Mehta (student member)

Gregory W. Gray (ex officio)

President of the Board of Regents for Higher Education

Robert Trefry (ex officio)

Chair of the Connecticut Technical High School System Governing Board

Stefan Pryor

Commissioner of Education

CONTENTS

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	1
I. <u>HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE</u> : Expect Students with Disabilities to Achieve Grade-Level Academic Content Standards	2
II. <u>DESCRIPTION OF THE CONNECTICUT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM</u>	4
A. Connecticut Smarter Balanced Assessments	4
B. Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) - Science	5
C. Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) - Science	5
D. Connecticut Alternate Assessments System	6
E. English Learner Assessments	7
F. National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	7
III. <u>WHO SHOULD BE TESTED?</u>	10
A. Underlying Intent of the Legislative Mandates and Policy Directives	10
1. Students Who Receive Special Education Services	10
a. Approved Private Special Education Programs, Unified School District (USD) 2, Public Agency Placement in a Private Residential Facility	10
b. Private Non-state Approved Special Education Programs	11
c. Nonpublic Schools	11
d. Out-of-state Private Special Education Programs	11
2. Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	11
3. Students Identified as English Learners (EL), Also Referred to as English Language Learners (ELL) or Student Who Have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	12
4. Home-schooled Students	13
5. Students Placed in Judicial Juvenile Residential Service Facilities (Juvenile Detention Centers)	13
6. Students Hospitalized or Homebound Due to Illness	13
7. Students on Homebound Instruction Due to Suspension or Expulsion	13
8. Nonpublic School Students	13
IV. <u>GRADE LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS, CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS AND SCIENCE</u>	14

V. GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT	15
A. Historical Perspective	15
B. National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC)	16
C. Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) Participation Guidelines	17
D. CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science	17
E. Required Training for Teachers Administering Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) & CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science	19
VI. ACCOMMODATIONS FOR TESTING	20
A. General Information about Accommodations	21
B. Who May Receive Accommodations?	21
1. Students Who Receive Special Education Services	21
2. Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973	21
3. Students Identified as English Learners (EL), Also Referred to as Students Who Are English Language Learners (ELL) or Students Who Have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) for CMT Science and CAPT Science	21
4. Students with Broken Fingers, Arms, Shoulders, etc.	22
VII. GUIDELINES FOR MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS	23
A. Description of Smarter Balanced Supports/Accommodations Categories	23
B. Documentation of Testing Related Recommendations on the IEP	24
C. Test Accommodations Collection Web site	25
D. Selecting Appropriate Test Accommodations	25
E. Allowable Accommodations for Special Education and 504 Students Only	26
1. Presentation Accommodations	26
a. Braille Booklets, Refreshable Braille Devices, Braille Embossers and Large Print Booklet	26
b. Sign Language	27
c. Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud	27
d. Noise Buffer	28
2. Response Accommodations	28
a. Circle Answers in CMT/CAPT Science Test Booklet (Multiple-choice Items Only)	29
b. Braille Responses	29
c. Large Print Responses on CMT/CAPT Science	29
d. Word Processor/Online Computer Response CMT/CAPT Science	30

e. Bubblers (for Science Test Booklet Only).....	30
f. Speech-to-Text, Voice-recognition Software, Dragon Dictate or Others.....	30
3. Other Accommodations.....	30
a. Specialized Calculator.....	30
b. Abacus.....	31
c. Multiplication Table (Grade 4 and above only).....	31
d. Time Extension CMT/CAPT Science Test.....	31
F. Supports for Students Identified as English Learners (EL).....	31
a. Audio Translation Glossary- Mathematics.....	31
b. Bilingual Dictionary- Word-to-Word.....	31
c. Translations- (Mathematics Glossaries).....	32
d. Translations Stacked in Spanish- (Mathematics).....	32
e. Native Language Reader Directions Only.....	32
f. Text-to-Speech.....	32
g. Time Extensions for CMT/CAPT Science.....	32
h. Separate Setting.....	33
i. Word-to-word Translation Dictionaries.....	33
G. Special Considerations and Special Accommodations.....	33
1. Students Who Are Present but Do Not Take the Test.....	33
2. Reluctant Students.....	33
3. Students Who Become Agitated or Disruptive.....	34
4. Accommodation Provision Error.....	34
H. Additional Considerations Related to Accommodations during Assessment.....	35
1. Planning for Test Day.....	35
2. Administering Assessments with Accommodations.....	35
3. Ethical Testing Practices.....	36
4. Standardization.....	36
5. Test Security.....	37
6. Connecticut's Test Security Policy.....	37
APPENDIX A — Medical Exemption.....	38
APPENDIX B — Special Accommodations.....	45

INTRODUCTION

This document includes revisions through July 2014 and is intended to provide guidance for Connecticut school district personnel who must make decisions about testing special student populations on the Smarter Balanced Assessments, Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science, Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Skills Checklist Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Skills Checklist Science, and the Connecticut Alternate Assessments (CTAA). These special student populations include students identified as eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students identified as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and students who are identified as English learners (EL), also referred to as English language learners (ELL) or students who have limited English proficiency. This also includes general education students who may require additional supports.

If after reviewing this document you have questions about the special student populations, the criteria for participation in various assessment options or allowable accommodations, please contact the Academic Office at 860-713-6855 or 860-713-6837.

In addition to this document, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) continues to prepare teachers to administer the Smarter Balanced Assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics to all students in Grades 3-8 and 11 in the spring of 2015. One component of the Smarter Balanced Assessment system includes understanding, selecting and providing access to the assessment. To assist administrators and all teachers working with general education students, students with disabilities and students who are English learners, we have created two types of optional professional learning opportunities for these topics. This link will provide you with more information:

[2014-15 CSDE Smarter Balanced Usability Accessibility & Accommodations Training](#)

I. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: EXPECT STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES TO ACHIEVE GRADE-LEVEL ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS

Federal legislation, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), requires that each state institute challenging content and performance standards for its public school students. These performance standards establish the level at which students are expected to master the material included in the state's content standards. The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 requires that all states have quality assessments in place in reading and math (and science by 2008) to determine the extent to which students have mastered the material outlined in the state's content standards. This requirement addresses a key element of the Title I program, i.e., a high-quality assessment system that is aligned with a state's content and performance standards to ensure that all students are held to the same high academic standards.

With the passage of Public Law 105-17 Individuals with Disabilities Education ACT (IDEA) Amendments of 1997 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, this same theme of improved student performance and increased accountability was fully incorporated into federal special education legislation. The 1997 amendments to IDEA in particular represented a subtle but important shift of emphasis in federal special education legislation. Historically, this legislation has been considered by many to be a "procedural" act. That is, the emphasis has been on a detailed set of procedures intended to ensure that students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least-restrictive environment (LRE). Earlier versions of this act were essentially silent on questions of specific curriculum content, with the development of an individualized education program (IEP) and decisions related to the provision of FAPE left to the IEP team. Similarly, student progress on the goals and objectives in the IEP was assessed by this team and reported privately to parents. Students with disabilities typically did not participate in districtwide or statewide assessments used with their nondisabled peers.

Although Connecticut has long advocated that, to the extent possible, students with disabilities should participate in both the general education curriculum and the standard administration of the state assessments; this has often not been the case nationally. It was only with the 1997 reauthorization of IDEA that having high expectations for students with disabilities became a national priority. The 1997 IDEA amendments required that these students be included in appropriately challenging curriculums and in districtwide and statewide assessments, and that states and school districts publicly account for the progress of these students. Clearly, two goals of IDEA are: 1) the participation of a high percentage of students with disabilities in standard districtwide and statewide testing and related accountability efforts, and 2) the availability of an alternate assessment for those few students who cannot appropriately participate in the standard assessment program.

Federal legislation, in the form of both the NCLB and the IDEA, and state legislation in the Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-14, and relatively recent implementation of the Connecticut Core Standards is consistent in the vision that is being promoted, i.e., high expectations, uniform standards and public accountability for the performance of all students, including those with disabilities and limited English proficiency. Connecticut's statewide assessment program is just one component of an overall accountability system that is intended to assess the effectiveness of Connecticut schools and lead to greater success for all students.

To understand this educational accountability system, one must consider the progress of all students on a number of key indicators. For more information, the publication [*The Condition of Education in Connecticut*](#) is available for download.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONNECTICUT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

A. SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Beginning with the 2014 – 15 school year, Connecticut as a member of the [Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium](#), will be administering assessments for English language arts/literacy and mathematics to students in all Grades 3-8 and 11, with the exception of special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. Students who were previously eligible to be assessed with the CMT/CAPT Modified Assessment System (MAS) will also be assessed with the Smarter Balanced summative assessments which are replacing the Connecticut Mastery Test and Connecticut Academic Performance Test, in the content areas of English language arts and mathematics replacing the legacy Connecticut Mastery Test and Connecticut Academic Performance Test in the content areas of English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The assessment system was developed by the member states of the Consortium, including Connecticut, to align to the Common Core State Standards.

Additionally, it is important to understand the Smarter Balanced summative test design and the activities associated with the test-taking situation. The Smarter Balanced summative assessment for English language arts/literacy and mathematics requires students to:

- participate in an online assessment comprised of two components, a computer adaptive test (CAT) and a performance task for each content area (the tests are not timed, however, recommended test session lengths of 40 to 120 minutes, depending upon content area and grade level, is provided in the Test Administration Manual
- demonstrate critical-thinking and problem solving skills;
- accurately respond to various item response types using a keyboard and mouse or touchpad

B. CONNECTICUT MASTERY TEST (CMT) - SCIENCE

Beginning with the March 2008 test administration, the CMT Science was added to in Grades 5 and 8. Content of the criterion-referenced CMT Science represents the most essential science skills at each grade level tested and is aligned with the 2005 [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#).

Additionally, it is important to understand the CMT Science test design and the activities associated with the test-taking situation. The CMT Science requires students to:

- participate in up to a 70-minute testing session;
- follow multiple-step directions as presented by the test examiner or as written in the test booklet;
- accurately shade in an answer bubble; and
- write legibly in the test booklet for open-ended questions.

For a more comprehensive explanation of the test design and content, refer to the [Fourth Generation Science Handbook](#) and [Science Test Format](#).

C. CONNECTICUT ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE TEST (CAPT) - SCIENCE

The Second Generation CAPT was administered for the first time in the spring of 2001 assessing and reporting on student performance in Science. A third generation of the CAPT was first introduced in 2007. This third generation is aligned with the 2005 [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#).

Students are awarded a Certificate of Mastery for science if they score at or above the state goal. Students who have not achieved goal in Grade 10 may voluntarily retake CAPT Science in Grade 11. Test results from Grades 10 and 11 become part of the students' permanent school records and are reported on their official school transcripts.

Since students who do not participate in the standard grade-level version of the CAPT will not have an opportunity to receive this Certificate of Mastery for Science, there may be important consequences for employment or postsecondary educational opportunities. Parents and students should be fully informed by the IEP team of the possible consequences of failing to participate in the standard CAPT when the IEP team recommends testing with the CAPT Science Skills Checklist.

Understanding a student's ability to manage the activities associated with the test-taking situation is as important as understanding test content. The CAPT Science requires students to:

- participate in two testing sessions of 50 minutes each, with a break of at least 15 minutes between test sessions;
- follow multiple-step directions as presented by the test examiner or as read in the test booklet;
- accurately shade in an answer bubble;
- write legibly in the answer booklet for open-ended questions; and
- read a variety of materials and write extended responses.

For a more comprehensive explanation of the test design and content, refer to [CAPT Third Generation Handbook for Science](#).

D. CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

For a small group of students with significant cognitive disabilities, who meet the eligibility criteria, Connecticut provides an alternate assessment. This alternate assessment is in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics (MA) and is available for students in Grades 3-8 and 11. It is called the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). Additionally, the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science is an alternate assessment available for students in Grades 5, 8 and 10.

CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science

The CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, available in Grades 5, 8 and 10 is designed exclusively for special education students with significant cognitive disabilities. As such, it is one component of Connecticut's alternate assessment system. Only identified special education students meeting specific eligibility criteria may participate in this alternate assessment and only if determined on an individual basis by an individualized education program (IEP) team.

The purpose of the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science is to provide an accountability measure to determine the extent to which students with significant cognitive disabilities have been given the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the general education curriculum. The CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science has been designed to align with the skills and objectives outlined in the 2005 [Core Science Curriculum Framework](#) for Grades 5, 8 and 10. Each indicator on the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science corresponds to a content standard and expected performance statement found in the curriculum frameworks. However, each indicator reflects a downward extension of the grade-level skill that allows it to be more accessible to students with significant cognitive disabilities.

Copies of each grade-level CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science are available on the CSDE Web site at: [Connecticut Alternate Assessment \(CTAA\) and Resources](#)

E. ENGLISH LEARNER ASSESSMENTS

Historically, Connecticut's English learner (EL) students have been participating in statewide assessments with accommodations if needed. These students acquiring English as a second language are required to meet the same academic performance standards expected of students whose first language is English. In addition to statewide assessment participation in Grades 3-8 and 11 (and Science in Grades 5, 8, and 10), all English learners will participate in an English language proficiency test as one component of the identification process. Connecticut English learners will be assessed with Language Assessment Scales (LAS Links) to demonstrate proficiency to exit English language programs.

F. NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS (NAEP)

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), is often called the "Nation's Report Card." It is the only measure of student achievement in the United States that allows for the comparison of Connecticut students to their peers in all other states. NAEP, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, has been conducted since 1969 and produces results that are widely reported by the national and local media.

Every year, some Connecticut schools are selected to participate in the NAEP. For each NAEP administration, representative samples of fourth, eighth and twelfth-graders in states and territories of the United States are tested in selected content areas. In odd-numbered years (e.g., 2013, 2015), the number of participating schools increases and the results are used to assess achievement for the state as a whole. Since it is critical that participants accurately represent Connecticut's public school population, students with disabilities and students who have limited English proficiency must be included in the testing.

School personnel are expected to make every effort to include all selected students with disabilities and English language learners in the assessments. Many of the accommodations that are provided for the Smarter Balanced assessments and CMT and CAPT Science are also available for the NAEP. As school personnel make specific decisions regarding how to include students in NAEP, there are several important factors to consider:

- NAEP does not produce scores for individual students and participation is anonymous;
- The NAEP assessments do not impose any consequences for students, teachers, schools or districts and are intended solely to provide an overall measure of educational achievement for the nation and individual states;
- Participating students are not required to complete the entire test and may skip any test question. Even when a student does not complete the entire test, valuable information is obtained from the item responses provided; and

- A notification letter is sent home to families of selected students. The letter explains the importance of NAEP and lets parents know that they may decide that their child will not participate.

Annually, Connecticut's NAEP State Coordinator provides the schools selected to participate in the NAEP with detailed information about available accommodations specific to the assessments that will be administered. Currently, NAEP is transitioning from a paper/pencil format to a technology-based format that will utilize tablets. In 2014-15, both modes of testing will be implemented in Connecticut. The table on the following pages shows the overall relationship between the test supports and accommodations for Connecticut's state assessments (Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science) and what is available for students with disabilities and English learners selected to take the NAEP.

Test Supports/Accommodations for Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners

State Assessment Supports/Accommodations	Availability for NAEP
Braille	Yes
Large Print or magnification	Yes, this is available for the NAEP paper/pencil test. For technology-based assessments, zooming and magnification are available.
ASL Presentation of Items	Yes, except for the reading test. This accommodation must be administered by school personnel.
Text-to-Speech	Yes, for technology-based assessments. However, in the case of the reading test, text-to-speech can be used for directions only.
Read Aloud by Certified Staff	Yes, except for the reading test.
Closed Captioning	Yes
Color Contrast- Online	Yes
Masking- Online	No
Color Overlay- Non-Embedded	Yes
Available on Computer or Tablet	Available only for technology-based versions of the assessment. Paper/pencil tests cannot be presented electronically.
Circle Answers in Test Booklet	Yes, this is available for the NAEP paper/pencil test.
Bubbler-Test Booklet Only	Yes, this is available for the NAEP paper/pencil test.
Speech-to-Text	Yes, this is available for the paper/pencil version of the assessment. This accommodation is treated as a typed response.
Alternate Response Options (Includes adapted keyboard/mouse, touchscreen, etc.)	This may be allowable for students taking the technology-based assessment, depending on the specific device needed and compatibility with NAEP-provided tablets.
Specialized Calculator	This accommodation may be allowable for calculator-active sections of the NAEP mathematics assessment, depending on the specific device used by the student.
Abacus	No
Multiplication Table	No
Time Extension	Yes
Separate Setting	Yes
Bilingual Dictionary	Yes, but not available for the reading test.
Native Language Reader-Directions Only	Available in Spanish for paper/pencil versions of mathematics, reading, and science.
Translation Glossary-Online	No
Audio Translation Glossary-Online	No
Translation (Stacked-Spanish Only)-Online	NAEP offers a “bilingual booklet” in Spanish for mathematics and science. The “bilingual booklet” is available for students selected for the paper/pencil version of NAEP in Grades 4 and 8 only.

Specific questions concerning NAEP accommodations should be directed to Renée Savoie, NAEP State Coordinator, at 860-713-6858.

III. WHO SHOULD BE TESTED?

A. UNDERLYING INTENT OF THE LEGISLATIVE MANDATES AND POLICY DIRECTIVES

1) Students Who Receive Special Education Services

As described earlier, Public Law 105-17, the IDEA amendments of 1997, introduced new requirements with regard to the participation of special education students in statewide and districtwide assessment programs. For states to be eligible for funding under IDEA, ***students with disabilities must be included in general statewide and districtwide assessment programs with appropriate supports and accommodations, when necessary.***

Additionally, under Section 612(a) (17) of this act, state or local agencies, as appropriate, were required to develop guidelines for the participation of children with disabilities in alternate assessments for children who could not participate, even with accommodations, in the standard statewide or districtwide assessment programs and to begin conducting such alternative assessments by no later than July 1, 2000.

Connecticut state statutes have been amended to comply with the federal regulations that require **all** special education students enrolled in public schools in Grades 3-8 and 11 participate in the Smarter Balanced statewide assessments or the Connecticut Alternate Assessments. Additionally, students in Grades 5, 8 and 10 must also participate in the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science, the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science or the CMT/ CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

a. **Approved Private Special Education Programs, Unified School District (USD) 2, Public Agency Placement in a Private Residential Facility**

Students **placed by their local school districts** in approved private special education programs or students who have been placed by a public agency in a private residential facility and who attend the facility's special education program, are considered public school students and must be tested. The private approved special education programs within Connecticut are required to conduct the testing for students enrolled in their programs. However, the local sending school district is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the appropriate testing occurs for each eligible student. Scores for these students are reported back to the responsible district.

b. **Private Non-state Approved Special Education Programs**

Students **placed by their local school districts** in private special education programs that have **not** been approved by the state are the responsibility of the placing district for assessment purposes. Districts placing students in non-approved private special

education programs must make a **good faith effort** to assess students in the non-approved program either by bringing the student back to the district for testing or by sending a certified staff member to the non-approved program to test the students. The certified school staff member must be fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for the Smarter Balanced, CTAA and CMT or CAPT Science. Due to teacher training requirements and the nature of how the assessment is completed, students identified as being eligible for the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science are not required to be assessed. Non-approved programs are **prohibited** from administering this statewide assessment to students.

c. Nonpublic Schools

Students **unilaterally placed in nonpublic schools by their parents** (including approved and non-approved private special education programs) are not considered public school students. Nonpublic schools are **prohibited** from administering the tests to students. If, at a later date, the local district agrees to assume educational responsibility, (i.e., agrees to provide FAPE), for a student unilaterally placed by their parents, then the student becomes a public school student at that point in time and the local district is responsible for ensuring that the student participates in Connecticut statewide testing.

d. Out-of-state Private Special Education Programs

For students placed in private special education programs in other states who are the educational responsibility of a local school district, the local school district must make a **good faith effort** to send a certified staff member to the out-of-state program to test the students. The certified school staff member must be fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for Smarter Balanced, CTAA and CMT or CAPT Science. Out-of-state special education programs are **prohibited** from administering the Smarter Balanced, CTAA and CMT or CAPT Science to students. Due to teacher training requirements and the nature of how the assessment is completed, students identified as being eligible for the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science are not required to be assessed.

2) Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a civil rights statute that states, in part, that no otherwise-qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Beyond guaranteeing access to the testing program, Section 504 offers equity in participation by making accommodations available to those students with disabilities so they may have an equal opportunity to perform at a level commensurate with their abilities.

Students who are not identified for special education services, but who are identified as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 **must participate in the standard grade-level Smarter Balanced summative assessments in Grades 3-8 and 11 and**

CMT or CAPT Science in Grades 5, 8 or 10. These students may be allowed test supports and accommodations as identified in the students' 504 plans. See Section VII for information about test accommodations.

3) Students Identified as English Learners (EL), Also Referred to as Students Who Are English Language Learners (ELL) or Students Who Have Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

Programs of English language instruction help students who are English language learners acquire the necessary spoken and written English skills. Both bilingual and transitional English as a Second Language (ESL) programs provide accommodations to make instruction in English understandable. The bilingual education program uses the student's native language as well as English for instruction in content areas, pursuant to Section 10-17e of the C.G.S., while ELL programs focus on developing English literacy rather than instruction in content areas, per se.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) allows for the exemption of some students with limited English proficiency if the student has been enrolled for the **first time** in a U.S. school for 12 months or less. For statewide testing purposes, Puerto Rico is **not** considered a U.S. school for these first 12 months only. In all instances, the decision to exempt an EL student from testing should be made by a team of teachers and the school administrator, i.e., this decision should not be made by a single individual.

Although English learner students **may** be exempted from only the English language arts sessions if they meet the criteria outlined above, **all** English learners (EL) **must** take the **math and science** portions of state assessments regardless of how long they have been enrolled in a U.S. school. This means EL students will participate in either the Smarter Balanced Assessments or CTAA for math. EL students in Grades 5 and 8 will participate in Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science or CMT Skills Checklist Science. EL students in Grade 10 will participate in Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science or CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

The accommodations for Science outlined in section VII F may be provided to any student identified as an English Learner for the CMT Science or the CAPT Science. *Once a student has met the English mastery standard, he or she is no longer considered a student with limited*

- 1) May be exempted from the Smarter Balanced English language arts test sessions: Reading, Writing, Listening and Research or may be exempted from the Connecticut Alternate Assessment English language arts test sessions: Reading and Writing;
- 2) Must be administered the appropriate English language proficiency assessment;
- 3) Must take the Smarter Balanced or CTAA Mathematics with accommodations as necessary; and
- 4) If in Grade 5, 8 or 10 must be administered the CMT or CAPT Science or the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science with accommodations as necessary.

It is important to note that the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) provides that these students *may* be exempted from reading and writing test sessions; it **does not require** that they be exempted. Careful consideration should be given to any decision to exempt these students in light of the Title I preference for including as many students as possible in statewide assessments. See Section VII F for additional information about the allowable test accommodations for students enrolled in programs as English language learners.

4) Home-schooled Students

Local school districts are **not required** to test students being home-schooled. Home-schooled students may **not** be tested using the Smarter Balanced assessment, CMT Science, CAPT Science, CTAA or CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

5) Students Placed in Judicial Juvenile Residential Service Facilities (Juvenile Detention Centers)

Both regular and special education students placed in Judicial Juvenile Residential Service Facilities (Juvenile Detention Centers) in Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven are considered public school students and must be tested. The Bridgeport Board of Education (Bridgeport), CREC (Hartford) and ACES (New Haven) are responsible for providing the educational services for students in these facilities. They are also required to conduct the testing for each eligible student. Individual student scores are reported back to the school district in which the student would otherwise be enrolled if they were not placed in a Judicial Juvenile Residential Service Facility.

6) Students Hospitalized or Homebound Due to Illness

Students who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness should be tested unless there are medical constraints. These students may have the test administered at home or in the hospital, provided the test is administered by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for Smarter Balanced, CMT Science, CAPT Science or CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

7) Students on Homebound Instruction Due to Suspension or Expulsion

Students who are receiving homebound instruction due to a suspension or expulsion **must** be tested either at home or, preferably, at the school district's central administrative offices by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for the Smarter Balanced, CMT Science, CAPT Science, CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

8) Nonpublic School Students

In instances where students are enrolled in nonpublic schools at the parent's expense, the students are not considered public school students and may **not** participate in Connecticut's statewide testing program.

IV. GRADE LEVEL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN SMARTER BALANCED SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENTS, CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENTS AND CMT/CAPTCIENCE

For purposes of Connecticut's statewide testing program, there are no ungraded school programs. Each student must be enrolled in a specific grade or assigned to a specific grade based on his or her age. This grade assignment should be specified in the Public School Information System (PSIS). Students in Grades 3-8 and 11 comprise the eligible population for participation in the Smarter Balanced summative assessments and Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) testing. In addition, students in Grades 5 and 8 participate in the CMT Science test or CMT Skills Checklist Science. In Grade 10, students will ONLY participate in the CAPT Science test or CAPT Skills Checklist Science. If there is any question as to the grade level for a particular student, district administrators are advised to verify how the student was reported in the PSIS and in the Special Education Data Application and Collection (SEDAC). Districts and private approved special education facilities are advised to work closely on the identification of students in the grades to be tested to avoid testing students in the wrong grade or not testing students in a required grade.

Students enrolled in high school present additional issues for consideration beyond age and years in school. Each local school district establishes its own policy for the determination of grade levels. Many high schools establish grade levels based on the accumulation of earned credits. However, this system and/or its timing must not result in a student not being tested. For example, based on earned credits, a student may be in Grade 9 one year and in Grade 11 by the following administration of the CAPT Science, thus skipping Grade 10 altogether. In this instance, the student must participate in the Grade 10 CAPT Science at the most logical time (e.g., in the year following his or her Grade 9 year).

V. GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

A. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

In a commentary to the proposed Federal Regulations (*Federal Register*, October 1997, p. 55055), the United States Department of Education estimated that approximately 1 to 2 percent of the total school population would require an alternate assessment. This translates into an expectation that the vast majority of special education students will participate in the standard grade-level version of statewide tests.

Section 602 (3) of IDEA '97 required states to create an alternative assessment that was aligned with their academic content standards, promoted access to the general curriculum and reflected professional judgment of the highest achievement standards possible. In 2007, the Connecticut State Department of Education implemented the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science for students with significant cognitive disabilities and for whom a standard statewide assessment was not appropriate. This assessment was intended to be used with approximately 1 percent of the total population. Since then, the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science has included a variety of enhancements and aims at providing an accurate picture of student achievement. The Skills Checklist Science is a working document that teachers complete throughout the school year. The document is used to assist in planning instruction, monitoring student growth, and progress and documenting achievement. Teachers rate students on grade-level academic skills and submit results for state/federal reporting purposes during the CMT/CAPT testing window.

In addition to our alternate assessment for science, Connecticut has developed the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA). Connecticut is a member of the National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) consortium. Similar to the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, NCSC is also developing a system of valid, reliable and fair next-generation assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards in English language arts/literacy (ELA/literacy) and mathematics for Grades 3-8 and 11 for students with significant cognitive disabilities. Thus, this new alternate assessment is the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and replaces the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist in English language arts and mathematics in 2015.

B. NATIONAL CENTER AND STATE COLLABORATIVE

The National Center and State Collaborative (NCSC) is applying the lessons learned from the past decade of research on alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards (AA-AAS) to develop a multi-state comprehensive assessment system for students with significant cognitive disabilities. The project draws on a strong research base to develop an AA-AAS that is built from the ground up on powerful validity arguments linked to clear learning outcomes and defensible assessment results, to complement the work of the Race to the Top

Common State Assessment Program (RTTT) consortia.

The long-term goal is to ensure that students with significant cognitive disabilities achieve increasingly higher academic outcomes and leave high school ready for post-secondary options. A well-designed summative assessment alone is insufficient to achieve that goal. Thus, the NCSC is developing a full system intended to support educators, which includes formative assessment tools and strategies, professional development on appropriate interim uses of data for progress monitoring, and management systems to ease the burdens of administration and documentation. All partners share a commitment to the research-to-practice focus of the project and the development of a comprehensive model of curriculum, instruction, assessment, and supportive professional development. These supports will improve the alignment of the entire system and strengthen the validity of inferences of the system of assessments.

C. CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT (CTAA) PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Connecticut Alternate Assessment Participation Guidelines

The criteria for participation in the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) reflect the pervasive nature of a significant cognitive disability. All content areas should be considered when determining eligibility for this assessment. Thus, a student who participates in the CTAA participates in this assessment for all content areas.

In addition, evidence for the decision for participating in the CTAA is **Not** based on:

1. A disability category or label
2. Poor attendance or extended absences
3. Native language/social/cultural or economic difference
4. Expected poor performance on the general education assessment
5. Academic and other services student receives
6. Educational environment or instructional setting
7. Percent of time receiving special education
8. English language learner (ELL) status
9. Low reading level/achievement level
10. Anticipated student's disruptive behavior
11. Impact of student scores on accountability system
12. Administrator decision
13. Anticipated emotional duress

14. Need for accommodations (e.g., assistive technology/AAC) to participate in assessment process

**Participation Requirements for Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and
CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science (all responses must be Yes)**

Participation Criteria	Participation Criteria Descriptors	Agree (Yes) or Disagree (No)? Provide documentation for each
1. The student has a significant cognitive disability	Review of student records indicate a disability or multiple disabilities that significantly impact intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior. <i>*Adaptive behavior is defined as essential for someone to live independently and to function safely in daily life.</i>	Yes / No
2. The student is learning content linked to (derived from) the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS)	Goals and instruction listed in the IEP for this student are linked to the enrolled grade level CCS and address knowledge and skills that are appropriate and challenging for this student.	Yes / No
3. The student requires extensive direct individualized instruction and substantial supports to achieve measureable gains in the grade- and age-appropriate curriculum.	The student (a) requires extensive, repeated, individualized instruction and support that is not of a temporary or transient nature and (b) uses substantially adapted materials and individualized methods of accessing information in alternative ways to acquire, maintain, generalize, demonstrate and transfer skills across multiple settings.	Yes / No

Students in Grade 5 and 8 who are eligible for the CTAA would also be eligible for the CMT Skills Checklist Science assessment. Therefore all students who meet the eligibility criteria for the CTAA in Grades 5 and 8 must also participate in the CMT Skills Checklist Science assessment. Students in Grade 10 who respond in the affirmative to all three criteria elements above would be eligible to participate in the CAPT Skills Checklist Science assessment.

D. CMT/CAPT SKILLS CHECKLIST SCIENCE

The alternate assessments available for students with significant cognitive disabilities in science is the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist. Only those students who qualify for the CTAA assessments in Grades 5 and 8 will participate in the CMT Skills Checklist Science. Students in Grade 10 with significant cognitive disabilities will participate ONLY in the CAPT Skills Checklist Science. These

alternate Science assessments are designed for those students with significant cognitive impairments whose educational program centers on the general education curriculum, but also may include a functional/daily living/self-help/social skills component. These students, who may participate in inclusive classrooms and in general education activities typically, have academic goals, as well as other goals with a functional focus.

Criteria for Including Students in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science

In determining whether a special education student should be assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, the IEP team should consider the criteria outlined below. The student must meet **all** of these criteria:

- the student has a significant cognitive impairment;
- the student requires intensive individualized instruction to acquire, maintain or generalize skills;
- the student requires direct instruction in multiple settings to successfully generalize skills to natural settings, including home, school and community; and
- the student's instructional program includes participation in the general education curriculum to the extent appropriate and may also include a functional and living skills component.

While there are no specific IQ requirements for participation in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, students who are assessed with the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science typically score two or more standard deviations below the mean in terms of overall cognitive ability and have significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and in adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social and practical adaptive skills. Frequently these students have been identified as having an intellectual disability (ID); however, students with other types of disabilities (e.g., autism, multiple disabilities, traumatic brain injury, etc.) who have evidence in their files of a significant cognitive disability may also satisfy the criteria for participation in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science.

The following factors **may not** serve as the sole basis for the determination to include a student in the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science:

- the student's disability category (e.g., intellectual disability, autism, etc.);
- the student's placement (e.g., self-contained classroom, regional program, etc.);
- the amount of time spent with nondisabled peers (e.g., 20 percent of the time, 10 percent of the time, etc.); and
- an expectation that, even with accommodations, the student will not score well on the standard version of the CMT or CAPT Science.

E. REQUIRED TRAINING FOR TEACHERS ADMINISTERING CONNECTICUT ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT (CTAA) & CMT/CAPT SKILLS CHECKLIST SCIENCE

The administration of both the Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science requires that the teacher who is primarily responsible for the student's academic instruction receive training through the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE). Training will be provided through an online course or through workshops made available by the CSDE at the beginning of each school year. This link will provide you with more information:

[2014-15 CSDE Smarter Balanced Usability Accessibility & Accommodations Training](#)

VI. ACCOMMODATIONS FOR TESTING

In this document, the term “test accommodations” refers to procedures in the areas of presentation, response and other during test administration that provide equitable access during the assessment for students with disabilities. These accommodations should not affect how scores are interpreted. Changes in test content generally are considered to be “test modifications.” Test modifications are changes in test administration or content such that the resulting test scores cannot be interpreted in the same way as scores from the original test administered in the standard manner.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT ACCOMMODATIONS

Both constitutional and statutory laws have shaped policy regarding the testing of students with disabilities. The 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution is viewed as being particularly relevant to assessment issues. Specifically, the 14th Amendment guarantees equal protection under the law which, in the educational domain, translates into a guarantee of equal educational opportunity. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 are civil rights statutes that prohibit discrimination and guarantee access and equity. Together, these acts entitle students with disabilities to participate in, and receive the benefits to be derived from, statewide testing efforts.

Accommodations provided to a student during statewide testing must be the same accommodations provided for classroom instruction and other assessments given throughout the school year. It is critical to note that although some accommodations may be appropriate for instructional use, they may not be appropriate for use on a standardized assessment. There may be consequences (e.g., invalidating a student’s test score) for the use of some accommodations during state assessments. It is very important for educators to become familiar with state policies regarding accommodations during statewide assessments.

Typically, accommodation use does not begin and end in school. Students who use accommodations will generally also need them at home, in the community, in postsecondary education and at work. Accommodations for instruction and assessment should be integrally intertwined.

Accommodations for test administration are provided to allow students with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their aptitude and achievement in testing situations rather than reflect their impairments. Although test accommodations provide students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, they do not guarantee equal outcomes. Again, an appropriate or reasonable accommodation should not interfere with the use of interpretation of a student’s scores.

B. WHO MAY RECEIVE ACCOMMODATIONS?

1) **Students Who Receive Special Education Services**

Accommodations are available for the Smarter Balanced, CTAA and CMT/CAPT Science. The student's IEP must specify which accommodations will be used during testing. The decisions regarding accommodations are made by the IEP team and should not be individual teacher decisions made immediately before or during test administration. These accommodations should be recommended by a student's teachers in consultation with one another and a principal/supervisor and the rationale for the decision should be documented in the student's IEP. These accommodations are also documented on the [CSDE Accommodations Data Collection Web site](#). (Allowable accommodations for special education students are outlined in Section VII E.)

2) **Students Identified as Disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Accommodations are available for the Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science assessments. The student's 504 plan must specify which accommodations will be used during testing. The decisions regarding accommodations are made by the 504 planning team and should not be individual teacher decisions made immediately before or during test administration. These accommodations should be recommended by a student's teachers in consultation with one another and a principal/supervisor and the rationale for the decision should be documented in the student's 504 plan. These accommodations are also documented on the [CSDE Accommodations Data Collection Web site](#). (Allowable accommodations for 504 students are outlined in Section VII E.)

3) **Students Identified as English Learners (EL), Also Referred to as Students Who Are English Language Learners (ELL) or Students Who Have Limited English Proficiency (LEP) for CMT Science and CAPT Science**

Programs of English language instruction help students who are English language learners acquire the necessary spoken and written English skills.

Both bilingual and transitional English as a second language (ESL) programs provide accommodations to make instruction in English understandable. The bilingual education program uses the student's native language, as well as English for instruction in content areas, pursuant to Section 10-17e of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) while ELL programs focus on developing English literacy rather than instruction in content areas, per se.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) allows for the exemption of some students with limited English proficiency if the student has been enrolled for the **first time** in a U.S. school for 12 months or less. For statewide testing purposes, Puerto Rico is **not** considered a U.S. school for these first 12 months only. In all instances, the decision to exempt an EL

student from testing should be made by a team of teachers and the school administrator (i.e., this decision should not be made by a single individual).

Although students may be **exempted** from only English language arts/literacy tests if they meet the criteria outlined above, the accommodations outlined in section VII may be provided to any student identified as an English learner for the CMT Science or the CAPT Science. *Once a student has met the English mastery standard, he or she is no longer considered a student with limited English proficiency and is therefore, not eligible for these Science accommodations.*

English learner accommodations for science must be entered on the CSDE Accommodation Collection Web site. Allowable supports/accommodations available for EL students in Science are outlined in Section VIII G.

4) Students with Broken Fingers, Arms, Shoulders, etc.

A student who is injured (broken arms, shoulder, fingers, etc.) in the days just before or during test administration has a temporary disability and *may* be eligible for accommodations under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This determination of temporary disability is made by a 504 planning team at a meeting in which the injury is documented, the student is determined eligible for Section 504 status, and a plan is developed outlining the accommodations necessary, if any, for the student to participate in instructional activities and the statewide assessment. Once identified as eligible for Section 504 status, students with broken fingers, arms, shoulder, etc., are allowed to use a variety of accommodations. In many cases delaying testing until later in the test window allows the swelling to go down sufficiently, so that the students can still write or type responses in spite of a cast, splint, etc. In other instances, as the students become adjusted or acclimated to a cast, splint, etc., they find creative ways to perform routine tasks, including providing a written or typed response on the test.

VII. GUIDELINES FOR MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT DESIGNATED SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS

A. DESCRIPTION OF SMARTER BALANCED SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATIONS CATEGORIES

In September 2013, Smarter Balanced Governing States unanimously approved the [Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines](#) for the assessment system. The guidelines were developed in collaboration with member states and nationally recognized experts on English language learners and students with disabilities. The research-based policy outlines three categories of resources to ensure that the assessments meet the needs of all students. These categories of resources are universal tools, designated supports, and accommodations for the Smarter Balanced assessments of English language arts/literacy and mathematics. The Guidelines are intended for school-level personnel and decision-making teams, particularly individualized education program (IEP) teams, as they prepare for and implement the Smarter Balanced assessment. The guidelines provide information for classroom teachers, English development educators, special education teachers, and related services personnel to use in selecting and administering universal tools, designated supports and accommodations for those students who need them. The guidelines are also intended for assessment staff and administrators who oversee the decisions that are made in instruction and assessment.

There are however, some differences for implementation for some of the supports/accommodations, as they are applied in Connecticut based upon historical policy. This section will include both, similar information provided in the Smarter Balanced [Usability, Accessibility, and Accommodations Guidelines](#) and those differences as they apply to students in Connecticut who participate the Smarter Balanced Assessments.

Universal tools are available to all students based on student preference and selection for the Smarter Balanced assessments. Universal tools are access features of the assessment that are either provided as digitally delivered components of the test administration system or separate from it.

Designated Supports for the Smarter Balanced assessments are those features that are available for use by any student for whom the need has been indicated by an educator (or team of educators with parent/guardian and student). It is recommended that a consistent process be developed and used to determine these supports for individual students. All educators making these decisions should be trained on the process and should be made aware of the range of designated supports available.

Accommodations are changes in procedures or materials that increase equitable access during the Smarter Balanced assessments. The accommodations are available for students for whom

there is documentation of the need for the accommodations on an individualized education program (IEP) or 504 accommodation plan. Assessment accommodations generate valid assessment results for students who need them; they allow these students to show what they know and can do.

Smarter Balanced Universal Tools, Designated Supports and Accommodations are grouped into two categories.

- **Embedded:** Available through the online computer platform.
- **Non-Embedded:** Provided to the student by the school.

CMT and CAPT Science supports for students with disabilities, students with a 504 plan and students identified as English learners (EL) are provided through accommodations, which are documented on the [CSDE Accommodations Data Collection Web site](#). (Allowable accommodations for 504 students are outlined in Section VII E.)

Connecticut Alternate Assessment (CTAA) and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science supports for students with significant cognitive disabilities are provided within the assessment design.

Supports and Accommodations are commonly categorized in three ways: presentation, response, and other:

- **Presentation Supports/Accommodations** — Allow students to access information in ways that do not require them to visually read standard print. These alternate modes of access are auditory, multisensory, tactile and visual.
- **Response Supports/Accommodations** — Allow students to complete activities, assignments and assessments in different ways or to solve or organize problems using some type of assistive device or organizer.
- **Other Supports/Accommodations** — Allow students the use of non-embedded material or devices.

B. DOCUMENTATION OF TESTING RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE IEP

IDEA Section 614, Subsection (d)(1)(A)(v) provides that an individualized education program (IEP) must include a statement of any **individual accommodations** in the administration of statewide or districtwide assessments of student achievement that are needed for the child to participate in such assessments. This means selecting from the allowable list of accommodations outlined in this document. These new requirements have been incorporated into **page 9** (ED620, revised 5/9/14) of the state mandated IEP document provided to districts by the Bureau of Special Education.

In addition, as described previously, the clear intent of the IDEA is to provide special education students with the opportunity to meet the state standards established for all students by

participating in the general education curriculum, and district and statewide assessments. Statewide testing efforts are accountability measures, whereby states publicly report on the progress of *all* students, including those receiving special education services toward achievement of these state standards.

Because every special education student must participate in statewide testing, members of every IEP team should begin their deliberations about such participation with the assumption that each student receiving special education services **will participate in the standard administration. A decision to assess a student on the CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science should be made only after it has been clearly established that the student has a significant cognitive disability and meets the other participation criteria outlined in Section V.**

If the IEP team determines that a child will not participate in a particular districtwide assessment of student achievement (or part of such an assessment), the IEP must include a statement on **page 9** of the state mandated IEP document explaining: a) why that assessment is not appropriate for the child, and b) how the child will otherwise be assessed. The Connecticut mandated [IEP Manual and Forms](#) is available on the CSDE Web site.

C. TEST ACCOMMODATIONS COLLECTION WEB SITE

All supports/accommodations recommended for students identified as special education, Section 504 or English learner (EL) **must** be entered on the [CSDE Accommodations Collection Web site](#) **prior to testing.**

Documentation on the [CSDE Accommodations Collection Web site](#), **prior to testing** for every student assessed with the CTAA and the CMT/CAPT Skills Checklist Science, requires submission of the [CTAA and CMT/CAPT Skills Checklists Science Eligibility & Learner Characteristics Inventory \(LCI\)](#).

For questions about the CSDE Accommodations Collection Web site, contact the Student Assessment Office at 860-713-6855 or 860-713-6837.

D. SELECTING APPROPRIATE TEST ACCOMMODATIONS

Deriving useful and meaningful interpretations from student responses is a major goal of any testing program. No accommodation should interfere with the accurate interpretation of a score. Professional judgment and experience play important roles in any decision concerning which support or accommodation is needed, the extent to which it is needed, and for which student. Listed below are some general guidelines for the IEP or 504 team to consider in determining accommodations for students.

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the accommodation fit the student's areas of strength and weakness, rather than the category of disability? (For example, not all students with learning |
|---|

disabilities have reading problems and, therefore, not all require that the math test be read to them.)

- Does the student's IEP or 504 plan call for the same or a similar accommodation for class work?
- Does the student use this accommodation regularly during classroom activities?
- Is the student sufficiently skilled to use this accommodation with ease or will the accommodation serve as an impediment? This question is especially pertinent when considering the use of technology or assistive technology devices. (For example, if a student is allowed to use text-to-speech, but has not experienced a digital voice during classwork, this accommodation may hamper his or her performance.)
- Is the accommodation necessary for this child? (For example, a student with a visual impairment who reads well may not need math problems read to him or her, but may require streamline view to better navigate enlarged text.)

E. ALLOWABLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND 504 STUDENTS ONLY

1) **Presentation Accommodations**

All students taking the Smarter Balanced summative assessment are allowed the use of various tools both embedded and non-embedded when appropriate for the content area test they are taking. All students are also allowed access to designated supports if a determination has been made through a student's needs profile.

Students taking the CMT/CAPT Science in test booklets are allowed to take notes in the margins of their test booklets. They may underline with a pencil or a highlighter to note key points or keep their place. Students need to understand however, that only those responses recorded in the answer spaces will be scored. Students may also use a piece of oak tag to reduce the visual field and/or to keep their place while working in the test booklet. All accommodations must be submitted to the CSDE using the Test Supports/Accommodations Form on the [CSDE Accommodations Collection Web site](#) before testing.

a. Braille Booklets, Refreshable Braille Devices, Braille Embossers and Large Print Booklet

Braille is a raised-dot code that individuals read with their fingertips. Graphic material (e.g., maps, charts, graphs, diagrams, and illustrations) is presented in a raised format (paper or thermoform). For the Smarter Balanced tests, contracted and non-contracted braille is available; Nemeth code is available for math. More information is available at: [Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing](#) and [Technology Requirements for Text-To-Braille](#). There is no large print booklet version of the Smarter Balanced summative assessment.

Braille and large print forms of the CMT and CAPT Science are available for students

who are blind or visually impaired. Test/answer booklets may not be photocopied or enlarged; however, as recommended in an IEP or 504 plan, visually impaired students may use any magnifying equipment available to them to enlarge the test booklet for viewing.

A separate test examiner's manual for the CMT/CAPT Braille or large print forms called, [General Instructions for Testing with Braille and Large Print Forms](#), is included in the shipment of Braille and large print forms. This manual includes more detailed information about administering the Braille and large print forms of the CMT/CAPT Science. In addition, a document titled "Notes to the Examiner" accompanies the Braille test booklets. This document details information for the test administrator where the Braille version of the test is necessarily different from the standard text version of the test.

Note: Students taking the Smarter Balanced test or the CMT/CAPT Science test on the Measurement Incorporated Secure Testing (MIST) Application will have the ability to magnify the display on the computer screen.

b. Sign Language

The Smarter Balanced summative assessment uses American Sign Language (ASL) videos to support students who are deaf or hearing impaired. Test content is translated into ASL and provided to students via video. For the Listening portion of the English language arts assessment only and for the entire mathematics assessment, full translations in ASL are delivered digitally through the test delivery system. A video of a human signer of ASL and the written test content are viewed on the same screen. The embedded ASL accommodation is not currently available on any ELA items that are not aligned to the Listening claim. For the Listening portion of the CAT test, a deaf or hard of hearing student who has a documented need in an IEP or 504 plan may use ASL. Currently, only ASL is available. This document provides instructions on how to access and use the American Sign Language (ASL) embedded accommodation for the Smarter Balanced Assessments: Embedded Accommodation – American Sign Language (ASL) Instructions ; see [Embedded Accommodation – American Sign Language \(ASL\) Instructions](#)

Students who are deaf or hearing impaired may have the CMT/CAPT Science test administered individually. Furthermore, a sign language interpreter may assist in test administration by giving directions and clarifying information as allowed in the CMT/CAPT Science Test Examiner's Manual.

c. Text-to-Speech and Read Aloud

For the Smarter Balanced Assessments, text is read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology. Students unable to take the Smarter Balanced Assessments on a computer and who need the test read to them may utilize a qualified human reader who follows the [Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader](#) and who has submitted a signed [Read Aloud Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments Security/Confidentiality](#)

[Agreement Form](#). For the CMT/CAPT Science tests, students receive the text-to-speech accommodation through the [Measurement Incorporated Secure Testing \(MIST\) System](#). A human reader may also be used if the student is unable to take the test online.

Text-to-Speech for the Smarter Balanced ELA Reading Passages

This accommodation allows the reading passages to be read aloud to the student via embedded text-to-speech technology. This accommodation is only for students in Grades 6-8 and 11 with a documented print disability or blind students in Grades 6-8 and 11 who do not yet have adequate braille skills. For blind students in Grades 3-5, text-to-speech of ELA reading passages is not available; the students would require a qualified human reader. Text to-speech and read aloud for ELA reading passages is not available for ELs (unless the student has an IEP or 504 plan). Whenever text-to-speech is used, appropriate headphones must be available to the student, unless the student is tested individually in a separate setting.

Streamlined Interfaced

This accommodation allows ELA and Math test to be presented without a split screen.

Read Aloud by a Certified Individual for the Smarter Balanced Assessments

The Read Aloud accommodation for ELA reading passages may only be provided through the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). Text is read aloud to the student by a trained and qualified human reader who follows the [Guidelines for Read Aloud, Test Reader](#) and who has submitted a signed [Read Aloud Protocol for Smarter Balanced Assessments Security/Confidentiality Agreement Form](#). All or portions of the content may be read aloud. Reading passages of the ELA assessment may also be read aloud but only for Grades 6-8 and 11 with a documented print disability or blind students in Grades 6-8 and 11 who do not yet have adequate braille skills.

Table 1 TEXT-TO-SPEECH & READ ALOUD SUPPORTS/ACCOMMODATION SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENTS

TEST	ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS		MATHEMATICS	
	Text-to-Speech	Read Aloud	Text-to-Speech	Read Aloud
Computer Adaptive Test (CAT)	Yes*	Yes**	Yes	Yes
Performance Task (PT)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Classroom Activity		Yes		Yes

* Reading passages of the ELA assessment only for Grades 6-8 and 11

** Reading passages of the ELA assessment for students in Grades 6-8 and 11 is provided through the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#).

Table 2 TEXT-TO-SPEECH & READ ALOUD ACCOMMODATION CMT/CAPT SCIENCE

TEST	CMT		CAPT	
	Text-to-Speech	Read Aloud	Text-to-Speech	Read Aloud
Science	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

d. Noise Buffer

The use of ear mufflers, white noise, and/or other equipment used to block external sounds is allowed.

2) Response Accommodations

a. Circle Answers in CMT/CAPT Science Test Booklet (Multiple-choice Items Only)

If necessary, students may **circle multiple-choice** answers in their science test booklets; however, **they must avoid making marks in the bubble area on CMT Science test booklets. Under the supervision of an administrator or district test coordinator, the test examiner should fill in the bubbles in the student's test/answer booklet after the student completes the test.**

b. Braille Responses

For the Smarter Balanced Assessment, students may respond in contracted or non-contracted braille. Nemeth code is available for math. Students may also respond using refreshable braille devices. If needed, students may work with a qualified scribe which requires the [Special Accommodations Procedure](#). More information available at: [Technical Specifications Manual for Online Testing](#) and [Technology Requirements for Text-to-Braille](#).

For CMT/CAPT Science blind students may record their responses using Braille onto a separate sheet of paper or use a word processor without using spell-check and grammar-check capabilities. **Students may not dictate their responses to open-ended or extended-response items.** Teachers must completely transcribe the Braille responses including all multiple-choice and grid-in responses into written English into the student's regular test booklet prior to submitting the documents. For additional information about administering the Braille version of the CMT/CAPT Science and directions for submitting typed responses, refer to the [General Instructions for Testing with Braille and Large-Print Forms](#) that accompanies the large print test booklets.

c. Large Print Responses on CMT/CAPT Science

Students may respond to multiple-choice and grid-in items in their large print test booklet. However, **the itinerant teacher must transcribe all multiple-choice and grid-in responses into the student's regular test booklet.** Students may respond to the open-

ended items in their large print test booklet. They may also type their responses without using spell-check and grammar-check capabilities. **Students may not dictate their responses to open-ended or extended response items.**

For additional information about administering the Braille version of the CMT/CAPT and directions for submitting typed responses, refer to the [General Instructions for Testing with Braille and Large-Print Forms](#) that accompanies the Braille test booklets.

d. Word Processor/Online Computer Response CMT/CAPT Science

Students may use a word processor (without using spell-check or grammar-check capabilities) to complete open-ended or extended response items.

Refer to the CMT/CAPT Science District Test Coordinator’s Manual or the CMT/CAPT Science Test Examiner’s Manual for information about the proper format and return of word processor responses.

e. Bubbler (for Science Test Booklet Only)

Trained school personnel may **bubble** student verbal or nonverbal (pointing, gesturing) responses during testing to **multiple-choice and grid-in items only**. This accommodation is available only for those students for whom marking in the test booklet is not a sufficient accommodation and must be administered in an alternate test setting. **Students may not dictate their responses to open-ended or extended response items.**

Summary Bubbler Accommodation for Special Education and Section 504 Students

BUBBLER ACCOMMODATION* Test booklet only	CMT	CAPT
Multiple-choice/grid-in items	Yes	Yes
Open-ended/Extended response	No	No

*Record an examinee’s verbal/or nonverbal response to **multiple-choice or grid-in items only**.

f. Speech-to-Text, Voice-recognition Software, Dragon Dictate or Others

The student may use voice-recognition software for open-ended items and for those sub-tests requiring an extended response. This accommodation provides a method for a word processor response that bypasses a keyboard input. Historically, students who use this often have such severe physical disabilities, that handwriting and typing/word processing would compromise the student’s access to the test. Typically, these students use voice-recognition with a computer in school and will use such assistive technology at home and at work later in life. Due to technological advances and better access to assistive technology, more students with disabilities that are not physical in nature are also using this type of accommodation in the classroom. Therefore, students with disabilities who use voice-recognition software in the classroom and have this accommodation indicated on their IEP or 504 plan as an accommodation for classroom activities and assessments may use voice-recognition software on the Connecticut statewide assessments.

3) Other Accommodations

a. **Specialized Calculator**

A specialized calculator is a non-embedded calculator for students needing a special calculator, such as a braille calculator or a talking calculator. Care must be taken to ONLY provide it for the Smarter Balanced mathematics calculator allowed items in Grade 6-8 and 11.

b. **Abacus**

This tool may be used in place of scratch paper for students who typically use an abacus. This accommodation is only available for the Smarter Balanced mathematics test.

c. **Multiplication Table (Grade 4 and above only)**

A paper-based single digit (1-9) [multiplication table](#) is available for students in Grades 4 and above for the Smarter Balanced mathematics assessment. This tool may be used for reference for students with an IEP or 504 plan documented need for this accommodation.

d. **Time Extension CMT/CAPT Science Test**

Time extensions beyond those stated in the CMT/CAPT Science Test Examiner's Manual may be granted to students whose disability makes completion of the test within prescribed time limits unrealistic. For each testing session, time may be extended for as long as necessary provided the student does not suffer from fatigue and the test session is not carried over to another day. (For example, CAPT Science I may be administered on one day and Science II may be administered the following day; however, neither section may be administered over two days.) A good benchmark for time extensions is one and a half times the standard testing period for a specific subtest. Students who receive extended time **must be tested separately** from those students tested under standard time limits. If factors such as mental and/or physical fatigue or disruptive behavior present a problem, it is acceptable to plan breaks within one sitting of the test administration or to spread out test activities over several sittings in one day. Care should be taken to ensure that students do not have an opportunity to share and/or compare test information during any breaks that are provided.

Some students with health problems and/or medication schedules benefit by being tested at particular times of the day (e.g., first thing in the morning, immediately following medication, etc.). It is permissible to test at a time that is most beneficial to the student.

F. SUPPORTS FOR STUDENTS IDENTIFIED AS ENGLISH LEARNERS (EL)

a. **Audio Translation Glossary- Mathematics**

Translated glossaries are a language support provided through Smarter Balanced test delivery system. The translated glossaries are provided for selected construct-irrelevant terms for mathematics. Translations for these terms appear and are spoken on the computer when students click on them.

b. Bilingual Dictionary- Word-to-Word

A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary is a language support. A bilingual/dual language word-to-word dictionary can be used for the full write portion of an ELA performance task. A full write is the second part of a performance task. (Also, allowable for science and mathematics)

c. Translations- (Mathematics Glossaries)

Translated glossaries are a language support. The translated glossaries are provided for selected construct-irrelevant terms on the math assessment.

- **Embedded**

Translations for these terms appear on the computer screen when students click on them. There are primary language pop-up and audio glossaries in various languages and dialects including Spanish, Vietnamese, Arabic, Tagalog, Ilokano, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, and Ukrainian.

- **Non-Embedded**

The translations glossary non-embedded designated support includes the customized translation of pre-determined construct-irrelevant terms that are most challenging to English learners. The translation of the terms is context-specific and grade-appropriate. Bilingual dictionaries often do not provide context-specific information nor are they customized.

d. Translations Stacked in Spanish- (Mathematics)

Stacked translations are a language support available for some Spanish speaking students. In a stacked translation the full translation of each math test item appears above the original English version.

e. Native Language Reader Directions Only

All test directions may be read and clarified in English or the student's native language for EL students who have been identified as needing this support. A non-certified or certified staff person may administer this accommodation. For the **Smarter Balanced Assessments, a PDF of directions translated in each of the languages currently supported is provided.**

f. Text-to-Speech

Text-to-speech is available as an embedded designated support for EL students for the Smarter Balanced mathematics stimuli and items and for ELA items (not for reading passages). Text to-speech and read aloud for ELA reading passages is not available for ELs (unless the student has an IEP or 504 plan). For CMT and CAPT Science, EL students

receive this accommodation provided as an online text reader through Measurement Incorporated Secure Test (MIST). Whenever text-to-speech is used, appropriate headphones must be available to the student, unless the student is tested individually in a separate setting.

g. Time Extensions for CMT/CAPT Science

Time extensions beyond those stated in the Test Examiner’s Manual may be granted to a student whose limited English proficiency makes completion of the test within the prescribed time limits unrealistic. Time may be extended for as long as necessary provided the student does not become unreasonably fatigued. A good benchmark is one and a half times the standard time for the subtest. All students who receive extended time must be tested separately from students being tested under standard time limits. If such factors as mental or physical fatigue or disruptive behavior present a problem, it is acceptable to plan breaks within one test sitting or to spread out the test activities over several sittings on an individual student basis. However, each test session/test sitting must be completed in a single day. Stated differently, test sessions may not be split between two different days.

h. Separate Setting

Special care should be taken to avoid disrupting any student during test administration. If a particular student is easily distracted, highly disruptive or in need of any of the accommodations previously described, the test may be administered to this student individually (e.g., in a carrel or in a separate room) to avoid disrupting other students.

i. Word-to-word Translation Dictionaries

A word-to-word dictionary is permitted for word-to-word translations only. This can be a book or electronic device. Dictionaries or electronic devices containing definitions are not allowed to be used in the testing situation.

G. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

1) Students Who Are Present but Do Not Take the Test

Some students are present in school during the testing window, but for any number of reasons do not take the test. These students may or may not have disabilities or have limited English proficiency.

Students with serious emotional and behavioral concerns often are among the most difficult to test. Even with suitable accommodations and individual administration, students sometimes refuse to be tested or become agitated or disruptive to the point that testing for those students is not appropriate. If a student reaches this point, testing must be stopped.

The Test Examiner’s Manual outlines strategies for preparing and reassuring students prior to test administration in an effort to reduce anxiety and promote full participation. There are instances in which the student “refuses” to even attempt the test, and simply puts his or

her head on the desk without disrupting other students. **In these cases, the test examiner should indicate the test was “Left Blank” by darkening the appropriate bubble on the *back cover* of the science test booklet or by using the Smarter Balanced Online Administration Manual.**

2) Reluctant Students

In other situations, a student reluctantly begins the test and then becomes impatient or frustrated, but does not disturb other students. For CMT/CAPT, the test examiner should encourage the student to continue the test. For the Smarter Balanced Assessments, the student may resume testing at a later time or day. The student may decide to attempt the test later in the same session. The student will receive a score based on the number of items completed.

3) Students Who Become Agitated or Disruptive

In those circumstances where the student becomes emotionally agitated and/or disruptive, he or she should be promptly removed from the class if being tested in a group. If the student is being tested individually, the student should be provided with a break. An attempt should be made to reassure the student and continue testing. If, however, it is apparent that the student cannot continue, the test administrator may collect the student’s test materials or pause the test and remove the student from the test setting for the time remaining in the particular test period. If the student does not finish testing and has attempted any questions, the student will receive a score based on the number of items completed. If the student did not attempt any items, please refer the section titled “Students Who Are Present but Do Not Take the Test.”

In all the examples provided, every reasonable effort should be made to encourage the student to complete the test on which he or she is working.

4) Accommodation Provision Error

A student’s IEP team is responsible for determining the support(s)/accommodation(s) a student should receive during statewide testing. During testing it is essential that all proctors be aware of all supports and accommodations the student should receive for each of the sub-tests. If a student did not receive their IEP mandated supports and/or accommodation(s) or received a support and accommodation in error, the district test coordinator (DTC) must be informed immediately. The DTC must then call the CSDE student assessment office immediately. For Smarter Balanced assessments, a separate online system is available to record these incidents.

If a student refuses the support(s)/accommodation(s) during testing, a district is encouraged to document this refusal and keep this information in the student’s file. This may be important for determining appropriate supports and accommodations for this student in the future.

H. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO ACCOMMODATIONS DURING ASSESSMENT

1) **Planning for Test Day**

Once decisions have been made about providing accommodations to meet individual student needs, the logistics of providing the actual accommodations during state and district assessments must be mapped out. It is not uncommon for members of the IEP team, most often special education teachers, to be given the responsibility for arranging, coordinating and providing assessment accommodations for all students who may need them. Thus, it is essential for all IEP team members to know and understand the requirements and consequences of district and state assessments, including the use of accommodations. It is important to engage the appropriate personnel, including paraprofessionals to plan the logistics and provisions of assessment accommodations on test day. Prior to the day of a test, be certain that test coordinators and test examiners know what accommodations each student will be using and how to administer them properly. For example, test coordinators and test examiners need to know which students will be allowed extra time to complete the test so that separate test settings may be arranged for those students. Staff administering accommodations, such as reading to a student, must adhere to the specific guidelines in this document so that student scores are valid.

2) **Administering Assessments with Accommodations**

State and local laws and policies specify practices to assure test security and the standardized and ethical administration of assessments. Test coordinators, test examiners and all staff members involved in test administration must adhere to these policies. The Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement (NCME, 1995) states that test examiners and others involved in assessments must:

- take appropriate security precautions before, during, and after the administration of the assessment;
- understand the procedures needed to administer the assessment prior to administration;
- administer standardized assessments according to prescribed procedures and conditions and notify appropriate personnel if any nonstandard or delimiting conditions occur;
- avoid any conditions in the conduct of the assessment that might invalidate the results;
- provide for and document all reasonable and allowable accommodations for the administration of the assessment to students with disabilities or special needs;

and

- avoid actions or conditions that would permit or encourage individuals or groups to receive scores that misrepresent their actual levels of attainment.¹

Failure to adhere to these practices may constitute a test irregularity or a breach of test security and must be reported immediately to the Student Assessment Office at 860-713-6860 and investigated according to state testing policies.

3) Ethical Testing Practices

Ethical testing practices must be maintained during the administration of a test. Unethical testing practices relate to inappropriate interactions between test examiners and students taking the test. Unethical practices include changing the content by paraphrasing or offering additional information, coaching students during testing, editing student responses or giving clues in any way.

4) Standardization

Standardization refers to adherence to uniform administration procedures and conditions during an assessment. Standardization is an essential feature of educational assessments and is necessary to produce comparable information about student learning. Strict adherence to guidelines detailing instructions and procedures for the administration of accommodations is necessary to ensure test results reflect actual student learning.

¹. National Council on Measurement in Education. (1995). *Code of Professional Responsibilities in Educational Measurement*. Washington, DC: Author.

5) Test Security

Test security involves maintaining the confidentiality of test questions and answers, and is critical in ensuring the integrity and validity of a test. Test security can become an issue when accessible test formats are used (e.g., Braille, large print) or when someone other than the student is allowed to see the test (e.g., interpreter, reader). To ensure test security and confidentiality, test administrators need to: 1) keep testing materials in a secure place to prevent unauthorized access; 2) keep all test content confidential and refrain from sharing information or revealing test content with anyone; and 3) return all materials as instructed.

6) Connecticut's Test Security Policy

The CMT/CAPT Science and the Smarter Balanced assessment test administration manuals contain specific instructions that proctors must follow to ensure security and validity. Therefore, it is essential that each test examiner review the entire test administration manual for both assessments prior to administering any part of the Connecticut statewide assessments. Violation of test security is a serious matter with far-reaching consequences. Breaches of test security include, but are not limited to, photographing/copying of test materials, failing to return test materials, coaching students, giving students answers, and/or changing students' answers. Such acts may lead to the invalidation of an entire school district's student test scores, disruption of the test system statewide, and legal action against the individuals committing the breach. A breach of test security may be dealt with as a violation of the Code of Professional Responsibility for Teachers, as well as a violation of other pertinent state and federal law and regulation. The Connecticut State Department of Education will investigate all such matters and pursue appropriate follow-up action. Any person found to have breached the security of the test system may be subject to sanctions including, but not limited to, disciplinary action by a local board of education, the revocation of Connecticut teaching certification by the State Board of Education [see Section 10-145b(m) of the Connecticut General Statutes], and civil liability pursuant to federal copyright law.

APPENDIX A

MEDICAL EXEMPTION

Students with Temporary Medical Conditions Attending School

Every year during statewide testing, there are cases of students with various medical conditions that affect their ability to participate in testing. In some cases, the student may have a note from a medical professional stating that the student should be excused from participating in testing. State law stipulates that all public school students in the specified grades who receive educational services must participate in statewide assessment.

In some cases, a student may have been injured and the student's medical condition (e.g., broken hand or arm, concussion) may temporarily impact his or her ability to complete the test. There is no exemption from administering the statewide test to these students under the law. Therefore, to test the injured student, the first option would be to delay testing until later in the test administration window to give the student enough time to recover.

A student who is injured in the days just before or during test administration has a temporary disability and may be eligible for accommodations under Section 504. This determination of temporary disability is made by a 504 planning team at a meeting in which the injury is documented. If the student is determined eligible for Section 504 status, a plan is developed outlining the accommodations necessary, for the student to participate in instructional activities and statewide assessment. If standard accommodations are not sufficient for statewide assessment, contact the academic office to see what other accommodation options are available.

Medical Exemption Procedure

Definition: In Connecticut, the exemption determination for a medical emergency rests primarily on the following criteria. **The student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction.** Students who are hospitalized or homebound due to illness should be tested unless there are medical constraints. These students can have the test administered at home or in the hospital provided the test is administered by a certified school staff member who is fully trained in the proper test administration and security procedures for the Smarter Balanced Assessments, CMT/CAPT Science and CTAA.

In rare cases, there may be a student who experiences a medical emergency just prior to or during the testing window. There is a process whereby, the student may receive an exemption from testing due to the emergency nature of the medical condition, if the criteria for exemption are met.

A medical exemption can be given to a student depending on the availability of the student during the statewide testing window. An application for medical exemption is required each year a student meets the criteria for exemption.

Step 1 – Initial Contact:

The District Test Coordinator (DTC) contacts the Academic Office at the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) prior to the statewide testing window or at the time the student becomes medically unavailable during the statewide testing.

- Contact Joe Amenta - joseph.amenta@ct.gov (860-713-6855) or Janet Stuck - janet.stuck@ct.gov (860-713-6837).
- Provide the following information:
 - State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
 - Student Name (last, first);
 - Date of Birth;
 - Grade;
 - Name of School, District, Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and
 - Reason for exemption.
- You will be notified if the student meets the qualification for medical exemption and whether to proceed to Step 2.

Step 2 – Medical Form:

- Based on the result of Step 1, the DTC will receive the Emergency Medical Exemption Form. This form will be partially completed with the name of the student who qualifies for a medical exemption.
- The remainder of Emergency Medical Exemption Form **must** be completed and signed by the student's attending physician.

If signed documentation is not received in accordance with the CSDE procedures all subtests not received will be marked absent.

Step 3 – Returning Documentation to the CSDE:

- The DTC will return a completed Emergency Medical Exemption Form and cover letter to:

Joseph Amenta or Janet Stuck, Education Consultant
Academic Office
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 222
P.O. Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06145-2219

CRITERIA FOR EXEMPTION FROM TESTING DUE TO A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

TO: CMT/CAPT District Test Coordinators

FROM: Barbara Q. Beaudin, Chief
Bureau of Student Assessment

DATE: December 2006

**RE: CRITERIA FOR EXEMPTION FROM TESTING DUE
TO A MEDICAL EMERGENCY**

In guidance issued in the late spring, the U.S. Department of Education now allows states to set policies for the exemption of individual students from statewide testing in cases where there is a medical emergency. States were advised to use their own discretion in the establishment of the exemption policy. Outlined below is Connecticut's policy and discussion points for your use with staff and/or parents as well as the rationale for the policy decisions.

In Connecticut, the exemption determination for a medical emergency rests primarily on the following criteria.

The student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction.

Rationale: We typically consider students who are well enough to receive homebound or hospitalized instruction well enough to be tested. The test schedule can be modified for these students so that they take only one test a day.

While we ask that the medical emergency be attested to by a physician, this attestation speaks to whether or not the student is available for homebound/hospitalized instruction. The physician is not asked to determine whether the student should take the test; the physician should determine whether the student is well enough to receive homebound or hospitalized instruction.

Factors to consider when in conversation with parents and/or school district personnel.

The illness, injury or condition is of an unexpected nature. It is not a chronic condition.

Rationale: It is expected that if the student has a chronic condition the district has taken the necessary steps to provide homebound/hospitalized instruction as necessary; has accommodations in place for test administration and is generally prepared to deal with the situation.

The emergency may be physical or emotional in nature, e.g., psychotic episode requiring hospitalization.

Rationale: Especially with adolescents, it is not unusual that the medical emergency is emotional in nature rather than just physical. We need to be sensitive to these emotional issues without exempting large numbers of students who are “nervous” and/or “anxious” about the test. We will need documentation of emotional incapacitation resulting in unavailability for instruction as determined by a qualified medical professional as the criteria for an emotional issue that is severe enough to warrant an exemption.

The student is absent due to a documented medical condition for the whole test window, including the make-up period.

Rationale: The testing window is generally long enough (about 3 weeks) to allow sufficient time for a student to make up any testing that has been missed. If the student has recovered and has time to make up the testing during the testing window, an exemption is not warranted.

Documentation of the medical emergency is required. The physician or psychiatrist must attest to the inability of the student to be available for instruction and testing. Physician means a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice medicine and surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means attestation required from an MD, DO or Psychiatrist. Attestations from social workers will not suffice.

Rationale: The circumstances surrounding a medical emergency must have a significant impact on the student’s ability to participate in the entire test. Since we are looking for documentation of a medical condition, it seems reasonable to expect the documentation come from the student’s doctor.

It may be necessary for the school nurse to have a discussion with the medical personnel caring for the student in order to fully understand the emergency situation, rather than relying solely upon district or parental explanations of the situation.

Rationale: It is not uncommon during the testing window to have school personnel or parents call the CSDE to report on the medical/emotional status of a student as an argument for not participating in the test. It is frequently difficult to make a valid judgment about such circumstances from afar. Having the school nurse in communication with the doctor, as necessary, will be helpful in determining and communicating the extent of the medical emergency. The school nurse will need to obtain proper authorization from the parent to communicate directly with the physician caring for the student.

The district may have to wait until the end of the test window to determine if the student will have qualified for a medical emergency exemption, will be considered absent, or will participate in some or all of the subtests.

Rationale: It is often difficult in the week(s) before the testing window to predict the extent of the medical emergency and whether the student will be able to participate in the test during the course of the test window.

If the district is able to have a discussion with CSDE staff about the particular student in question and submit appropriate medical documentation prior to the end of the test window, then no answer booklet will be submitted to the test contractor for scoring. This student will not be reflected in CMT/CAPT reports or in the AYP calculations.

All documentation pertinent to a request for a medical exemption must be submitted by the end of the week following the close of the testing window.

If the district is unable to secure and submit medical documentation to the CSDE before the end of the test window, a test booklet must be submitted for the student.

If the subsequent determination is made that the student is eligible for an exemption, the student will not be reflected in the CMT/CAPT reports and will not be included in AYP calculations.

If the subsequent determination is made that the student is NOT eligible for an exemption, the student will be recorded as absent in the CMT/CAPT reports and will be included in the AYP calculations.

Rationale: Because medical documentation is necessary for the exemption determination, until the documentation is available for review and discussion there is no exemption. Thus, an answer booklet must be submitted. However, there is no easy way to “pull” an answer booklet once it has been submitted to the test contractor for scoring.



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Emergency Medical Exemption Form

Date: _____

Joseph Amenta or Janet Stuck, Education Consultant
 Academic Office
 Connecticut State Department of Education
 165 Capitol Avenue
 P.O. Box 2219
 Hartford, Connecticut 06145-2219

Dear Mr. Amenta or Ms. Stuck:

_____ has been under my care since _____. This student is unable to attend school and is medically/emotionally unavailable for homebound/hospitalized instruction. This student will not be available to receive such instructional services until after _____.

Sincerely,

 DOCTOR'S SIGNATURE

 DOCTOR'S PRINTED NAME

Please Note: This form must be signed by a Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy licensed to practice medicine or surgery according to Chapter 370 and 371 of the Connecticut General Statutes, or licensed to practice medicine in another state. For the purpose of determining a medical emergency, this means attestation required from an MD, DO, or Psychiatrist. Attestations from social workers will not suffice. For purposes of HIPPA, the parent must be the one to present and secure this attestation from the doctor.
 CSDE 9-2010

Procedure for Returning Emergency Medical Exemption Form

The doctor completes the Emergency Medical Exemption Form provided to the District Test Coordinator by CSDE. The completed form letter is returned by U.S. mail with a cover letter on district letterhead to:

Joseph Amenta or Janet Stuck, Education Consultant
Academic Office
Connecticut State Department of Education
165 Capitol Avenue, Room 222
P.O. Box 2219
Hartford, CT 06145-2219

The cover letter should include:

- Student Name (last, first);
- State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
- Date of Birth;
- Grade;
- Name of School, District, Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and
- Reason for exemption.

A response letter from the CSDE will be delivered through U.S. mail to the individual indicated in the cover letter.

<p>Joseph Amenta Education Consultant Special Student Populations Academic Office Connecticut State Department of Education joseph.amenta@ct.gov Phone: 860-713-6855 Fax: 860-713-7030</p>	<p>Janet Stuck Education Consultant Special Student Populations Academic Office Connecticut State Department of Education janet.stuck@ct.gov Phone: 860-713-6837 Fax: 860-713-7030</p>
--	--

APPENDIX B

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Special Accommodation Procedure

Definition: Accommodations in test administration are provided to allow students with disabilities the opportunity to demonstrate their aptitude and achievement in testing situations rather than produce a score that mainly reflects their impairments. Although test accommodations provide students with an equal opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge, they do not guarantee equal outcomes. Again, an appropriate or reasonable accommodation should not interfere with the interpretation of a student's scores. This *Assessment Guidelines* current edition contains a substantial list of test accommodations that may be used by students with disabilities.

In exceptional circumstances, there may be a student whose disabilities are such that the allowable accommodations listed in the *Assessment Guidelines* would be insufficient to provide access to the Smarter Balanced Assessments and/or the Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Science, and the Connecticut Academic Performance Test (CAPT) Science. In these cases, upon request, the District Test Coordinator (DTC) will be provided with information regarding the *PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIAL DOCUMENTED ACCOMMODATIONS For Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science*. These special accommodations petitions **MUST** be submitted to Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in writing, **prior** to testing. These petitions must also include all of the necessary documentation to support any request for the use of an accommodation other than those allowed as indicated in the *Assessment Guidelines* current edition.

Step 1 – Initial Contact:

- The District Test Coordinator (DTC) contacts the CSDE at least two months prior to start of testing and describes special testing accommodations needed for a student.

Contacts:

Joe Amenta-joseph.amenta@ct.gov (860-713-6855) or
Janet Stuck-janet.stuck@ct.gov (860-713-6837)

- Provide the following information:
 - State Assigned Student Identification (SASID) number;
 - Student Name (last, first);
 - Date of Birth;
 - Grade;
 - Name of School, and District, or Approved Private Special Education Facility or RESC; and
 - Reason for special accommodation request.

- The CSDE makes initial determination providing suggestions for alternatives utilizing standard accommodations and if necessary proceeds to Step 2.

Step 2 – Petition for Special Documented Accommodations:

- The CSDE e-mails the Petition for Special Accommodations for the Special Documented Accommodations
- The DTC must complete this form and return it with **ALL** required documentation to either Joseph Amenta **or** Janet Stuck.

Joseph Amenta Academic Office Connecticut State Department of Education 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 222 P.O. Box 2219 Hartford, CT 06145-2219	Janet Stuck Academic Office Connecticut State Department of Education 165 Capitol Avenue, Room 222 P.O. Box 2219 Hartford, CT 06145-2219
---	---

Step 3 – Review of documentation:

- The CSDE will contact the student’s teacher and/or other appropriate district staff to discuss the student’s qualifications and need for the special accommodation indicated on the Petition for Approval of Special Documented Accommodations.
- Criteria used to determine approval of a petition for special accommodations include:
 - Evidence of appropriate specificity of special accommodations requested related to the individual need of the student throughout the IEP document. (States activities where required/duration/personnel support etc.).
 - Evidence that requested special accommodations are currently used during classroom instruction.
 - Evidence of student’s primary disability impacting test accessibility.
 - Evidence of student’s experience level with the special accommodations requested.
 - Evidence of goals to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities over time.

Step 4 – The CSDE sends letter of response to the DTC indicating the petition has been approved or denied.

Letters include:

- Date;
- Name and address of the DTC petitioning for special accommodation;
- Student Name;
- Test Year;
- Grade;
- Test (CMT Science, CAPT Science, Smarter Balanced);
- Description of disabling conditions and the impact on test accessibility; and
- Statement of approval or denial.
 - Letters of approval also include:
 - Explanation of special accommodations for each subtest;
 - Statement regarding score reporting and related judgments; and
 - Names individual (usually the District Test Coordinator) responsible for appropriate submission of materials.

PETITION FOR APPROVAL OF SPECIAL DOCUMENTED ACCOMMODATIONS
For Smarter Balanced and CMT/CAPT Science

Student Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Grade _____
(Last, First)

School _____ District _____ Date _____

Student has an: IEP ☐ Section 504 plan ☐ (If neither, stop here, student does not qualify)

Subject Area (select all that apply): ELA ☐ Mathematics ☐ Science ☐

Answer the following questions in Section I and II to determine if a student qualifies for special documented accommodations.

SECTION I

1. Does the student's disability require that the Smarter Balanced Assessments test be given on paper? (*Print on Demand Accommodation*) Yes ☐ No ☐
2. Does the student have a documented print disability that requires ELA passages read to them by a trained educator? (Grades 6-8 & 11 only) (*Read Aloud Accommodation*) Yes ☐ No ☐
3. Is this a student who is blind without adequate braille skills that requires ELA passages read to them by a trained educator? (*Read Aloud Accommodation*) Yes ☐ No ☐
4. Does the student's disability prevent him/her from answering questions on a computer and/or in the CMT/CAPT Science booklet? (*Scribe Accommodation*) Yes ☐ No ☐
5. Does the student have a documented need to use specific software/hardware in order to participate on the Smarter Balanced Assessments and/or CMT/ CAPT Science that does not function on the Smarter Balanced and/or MIST online platform? Yes ☐ No ☐

SECTION II

1. Explain how this accommodation is presently being provided in the student's instructional setting. (Attach additional pages if necessary)
2. Provide supporting documentation. If applicable, enclose a copy of the student's most recent psycho-educational, evaluation and physical therapy, speech/language, etc., evaluations that document the conditions/characteristics described in item 1, above. List the document(s) that are enclosed.
3. Enclose a copy of the student's latest Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan which documents the use of the proposed accommodation(s) in the student's current instructional setting.

Certification: We believe that the proposed documented accommodations are necessary in order for this student to participate in Smarter Balanced Assessments and/or CMT CAPT Science.

Teacher Name _____
Print Telephone Number
Teacher Signature _____

Special Education Director Name _____
Print Telephone Number
Special Education Director Signature _____

District Test Coordinator Name _____
Print Telephone Number

DRAFT-9/8/2014

*District Test Coordinator Signature*_____

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Academic Office

Dianna Roberge-Wentzell
Chief Academic Officer

June Sanford
Bureau Chief

Joseph Amenta/Janet Stuck
Education Consultants
Special Populations